CASE STUDY
VGR IT FREES UP TIME & SAVES MILLIONS OF KRONOR IN ITS OPERATIONS

Västra Götalandsregionen (translates to "The West Götaland's Region" and VGR for short), with its 55,000 employees, is Sweden's largest organization and is responsible for areas such as healthcare, local traffic, and regional development.

VGR IT, the West Götaland region's IT organization, is in charge of digitalization and involved in application development, operations, and support of IT infrastructure. It supports the business with appropriate IT support and its continued business development. From an organizational point of view, VGR IT is a department within the Central Group Office with over 600 employees. The department was founded through a merger of several IT units.

THE CHALLENGE: MANUAL PROCESSES & LONG LEAD TIMES

Within a large organization such as VGR, hugely diversified operations exist, all of which have unique requirements and needs. This requires both competence and numerous IT systems to support the daily tasks. For VGR IT, it means, for example, delivering smart IT support to HR departments, local government, finance, administration, and various healthcare institutions – to name a few.

This customer case would like to address working methods and results created using InRule's process automation platform to digitalize administrative processes and routines.

Come along and join us on a journey, taking you from operational needs to a rolled-out solution.

1. DISCOVER SYMPTOMS

An accounting department in Borås discovers they're working inefficiently – they use Excel, e-mail, forms in paper format, and manual handling of cases. How this was discovered may be attributed to a service guarantee or other, a case that fell between the cracks, or a review of the business carried out.

- Such manual procedures lead to symptoms such as:
- Lengthy lead times
- Time-consuming management
- Poor overview & transparency of the workflow (processes)
- Quality deficiencies
- Difficulty training new employees (knowledge transfer)

Typically, a business developer or line manager detects these symptoms and passes them on to either the

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Västra Götalandsregionen

central function of Finance – or directly to VGR IT to find a solution to digitalize the process. Once it reaches VGR IT, the requirement goes to the process-and-project-tools owner, who is accustomed to delivering smart solutions for this type of need.

2. EVALUATES ROOT CAUSE AND CAPTURE PROCESS

When the business has expressed its desires, the "discovery phase" begins. No stone is left unturned in order to capture the process and working methods.

The working method has been proven and involves the following steps:

- Identify and estimate the value of digitalizing the process. For example, how much time can be saved? How much can lead time be shortened?
- Discovery: Capture the process and needs of the operations. This work, carried out in the form of a workshop, involves understanding the needs in-depth but also seeing what technical needs are required of IT support.
- Estimates/quotes are made by VGR IT – i.e. how much working time (internal/external) is spent on developing the requested solution. This is also done in consultation with InRule in the event automation, integration, and more advanced logic are to be created.
- If the cost is justified, a decision is made to build and develop the solution.

During the workshop and the discovery phase, operations are often introduced to InRule process automation, VGR's process & application tool. It is a platform on which it is simple to model processes that can then be transformed into customized applications to digitalize and automate virtually all types of business processes.

3. DEVELOPING A SOLUTION

If a favorable decision is taken in the previous step, the work commences. InRule's three-step model is then used, which builds upon former steps.

01 DISCOVERY 02 SOLUTION 03 DELIVERY
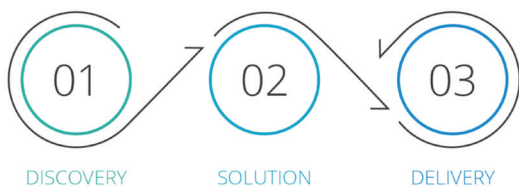
- Discover (Analyze)
- Solution (Design, Validate, Implement)
- Delivery (Check, Adjust, Improve)

Customarily, the work for an advanced application takes just a few weeks or months and a few hundred hours; sometimes, just a handful of hours in the case of a simpler support process.

The reason why the work goes so rapidly is owing to the use of a low-code platform. Instead of developing applications and IT support with complicated codes, visual interfaces are used that "draw" the application with drag and drop.

A further advantage of model-driven development is the commitment that comes from the business itself. Code can be difficult to understand and thus difficult to engage an external party in. But if IT support is developed using visual models, it will immediately be easier to participate in and affect the development.

4. IMPLEMENTATION & RESULTS

Once the application is developed, it is usually rolled out in iterations to smaller groups that play a part in validating the solution. In this way, feedback is obtained, as well as a number of super-users that participate in and disseminate knowledge about working methods and continual application improvement.

In total, VGR has about 30 applications built on InRule's platform, and each application, on average, frees up time corresponding to a full-time employee; time better spent on more value-adding tasks and allocated to the customer meeting.

Streamlining processes leads to a reduction in work duplication and manual labor, and quality assurance. In addition to direct savings, quite a few indirect savings occur — a positive side effect of a more efficient process.

5. ADDITIONAL USE AND CASES

An example of indirect savings comes from Digital Conference Bookings.

It's one of the applications that VGR and InRule jointly developed, which, having become so successful, saves the region almost SEK 9 million each year.

Savings are created from reduced reimbursement to suppliers to handle and make bookings for the entire Västra Götaland region's area of operations; for example, booking a training day or conference for a working group.

HOW IS THE INVESTMENT JUSTIFIED?

It should be easy to justify the investment — procedures, however, should be in place for managing investments in the IT department — when savings are made in another organizational part.

A piece of advice to deal with this is to divide savings or quality improvements into hard and soft values. Time saved or a reduced number of manual steps, for example, are hard values. Soft values consist of indirect effects, such as a modern work tool or a more change-friendly culture.

Where would you like to start?